

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 013407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH VS

SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR SC MEETING ON PARACELS

REF: SAIGON 938

1. FOLLOWING BACKGROUND, SUPPLEMENTING USUN'S REPORTING, MAY BE HELPFUL TO YOU IN DISCUSSING WITH GVN PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN SEEKING SC MEETING ON PARACELS.

2. THIS YEAR'S SECURITY COUNCIL HAS FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW AN ESPECIALLY UNFORTUNATE COMPOSITION. INDIA, WHICH WAS OCCASIONALLY HELPFUL, HAS BEEN REPLACED BY IRAQ. SUDAN WHICH DESPITE ITS RADICAL ORIENTATION HAS HAD RESPONSIBLE SC REP, IS REPLACED BY MAURITANIA. YUGOSLAVIA, WHICH HAS OCCASIONALLY BEEN VERY UNHELPFUL BUT STILL PLAYED INDEPENDENT ROLE, HAS BEEN REPLACED BY BYELORUSSIA. OTHER NEW MEMBERS ARE COSTA RICA (CONSTRUCTIVE) AND CAMEROON; AND NON-PERMANENT HOLDOVERS

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ARE AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, INDONESIA, KENYA AND PERU.

3. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 27, PARA 2 OF CHARTER, INSCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM REQUIRES PROCEDURAL MAJORITY OF NINE VOTES OUT OF 15. EVEN ASSUMING THAT USSR AND BYELORUSSIA MIGHT HAVE AN INTEREST IN BEARDING THE PRC ON THE PARACEL ISSUE, WHICH IS FAR FROM CERTAIN, IT IS EXCEEDINGLY UNLIKELY THAT NON-ALIGNED MEMBERS OF SC WOULD VOTE IN FAVOR OF INSCRIPTION BY TAKING SIDES WITH USSR AGAINST PRC; AND OF COURSE SYMPATHY AMONG THEM FOR RVN (EXCEPT IN CASE OF INDONESIA) IS NOT MARKED.

4. USUN IS REPORTING ON REACTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL SC MEMBERS TO INFORMAL SOUNDINGS ON OPPORTUNENESS OF MEETING ON PARACEL ISSUE. WHILE MANY OF THEM SEEM TO BE CIRCUMSPECT IN VOICING OPINIONS, RVN SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT AN ABSTENTION ON INSCRIPTION HAS THE SAME EFFECT AS A NEGATIVE VOTE, SINCE NINE "AFFIRMATIVE" VOTES ARE REQUIRED.

5. HUMMEL AND STEARNS COVERED SUBSTANCE OF FOREGOING WITH GVN AMB. PHUONG WHEN HE CALLED AT DEPARTMENT THIS AFTERNOON (SEPTEL). BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR EMBASSY SAIGON TO GO OVER GROUND WITH MFA AS WELL. IN SPEAKING TO PHUONG WE EMPHASIZED THAT WE WERE NOT REQUESTING GVN TO WITHDRAW REQUEST FOR MEETING BUT WERE SIMPLY POINTING OUT DIFFICULTIES IT WOULD ENCOUNTER AND POSSIBILITY OF COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE EFFECTS IN UNLIKELY EVENT MEETING WAS HELD. KISSINGER

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